Church Principles For Lay People

The People's Book Of Worship

A Study of The Book Of Common Prayer

John Wallace Suter
and
Charles Morris Addison

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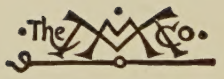

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TORONTO

THE PEOPLE'S BOOK OF WORSHIP

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

BY

JOHN WALLACE SUTER

AND

CHARLES MORRIS ADDISON

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1919

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Set up and electrotyped. Published, April, 1919

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THE PEOPLE'S BOOK OF WORSHIP

THE PEOPLE'S BOOK OF WORSHIP

I

THE MEANING OF WORSHIP

1

THE Book of Common Prayer is one of many forms by which the religious life expresses itself in worship. Before we can study the Book intelligently, we must first consider its purpose. That, very evidently, is to provide an authoritative form for the expression, in public and corporately, of the human desire to worship God, as it is found among members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The meaning and value of its contents can only be judged when we have settled what we are to understand by worship, and that in turn must be governed by what we know of the character of God, who is the object of our worship. To have a false idea of God's nature must give a false tone to our worship. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." (Heb. 11:6). The angry God must be propitiated

with the blood of men and beasts, the sensuous God with the odor of incense, the God who is far off will be worshiped differently from the God who is within; if God is only the great theological Purist, we need only approach him through the Westminster Catechism, which is a different approach from that of the prodigal to his loving Father. The God whom we worship in the use of our Prayer Book is the one revealed to us by his Son, a Person who is Spirit, a Person who can be loved by us with all our heart and mind and soul and strength, because we too are spirits, and because he is our Father and we are his children. It is that sense of relationship at the root of our religion which constitutes our right to approach this God, and which, once felt, draws us to worship in this way.

Given the true God, then, our worship is what we do when we are conscious of him, of his worthiness and his presence. Because worship's root meaning is worth-ship, the acknowledgment of the dignity, the infinite value of God. Worship is the attitude and the act of man when he realizes how much God is worth. The thought of God comprises everything that we can conceive as most worthy. What he is,— all powerful, ever-present, infinitely righteous, loving and merciful,— is worth more to us than anything else in the world. If he were not, or if he were not all this, then life would be not worth living, nothing would be worth while. But in him all life gains a value and all we are and all we have and all we hope to be becomes of worth to us because God is and is what

he is. The vision of the worship of God in heaven, so beautifully set forth in the Apocalypse, is only the vision of God and his perfection, the adoration of his worthiness. "And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sitteth on the throne and shall worship him that liveth forever and ever and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.'" (Rev. 4:9–11.)

This acknowledgment of the infinite worth of God, this adoration of him for his perfections, this dedication of ourselves to his service, is the expression of our religious life, and is not to be confined to certain times and places. Religion is all inclusive and so is worship. It takes in all of life. It is not an appendage or attachment to life. It is constant, not recurrent. *Laborare est orare.* "Services," as we call what we do in church, are only a part of our "bounden duty and service," which Christians are trying to render all the time.

"True worship," says Charles Kingsley, "is a life, not a ceremony." And before him St. James had said, "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.) And the word translated "religion" here, means serv-

ice, or worship; the truest expression of our reverence for God is always and everywhere to do his will in ministering to his children.

This is all true. But in studying the Prayer Book, we are justified in confining ourselves to this particular aspect of the religious life, which has come to be commonly known as Worship — what we do when we are definitely conscious of God's presence and worth and have, or ought to have, nothing else to do.

II

We are also justified in still further narrowing the scope of our study by eliminating the worship of the individual. It is possible and very general and very valuable to worship God, in private. But the Prayer Book we are to study is the Book of Common Prayer, and implies the corporate character of its worship. Religion not only takes in the whole of each man's life, but is distinctly social and is only true religion when it feels its brotherhood as one family of God. Because God is the Father of a family, he is never truly known except as a Father. So Christ taught. And no father can be known except in relation to his family, in his home and around his family board. We may use no selfish, personal pronouns in addressing him. We must say "Our Father," remembering his other children.

So we believe that the highest form of worship must be social, the most effective prayer must be Common Prayer. The sense of God's presence may be very vivid to the man who has shut the

door and is alone with God, but there is a promise of a more special presence to the group of even two or three, and then the communion with God comes, as we know, not only directly, as in the closet, but communicated with a thrill from soul to soul, in the worshiping assembly. The mere fact of aggregation enhances the ability of each individual in the crowd to realize a great fact or spiritual truth. In all great crises men naturally flock together. So in worship, as in sorrow or in joy, men learn by gathering together and feel more deeply than any could alone.

"Psychologists have noted," says Streeter, "this power of mutual stimulus as the explanation of the fact that bodies of men acting together under a single impulse are capable, whether for good or evil, of a sensitiveness to impression, of a depth of emotion, or of a strength of purpose far beyond the individual capacity of their constituent members. Is it strange, then, that experience should show that a group of men or women are capable of realizing and appropriating the inspiration of the Divine Presence, or of submitting themselves to the guidance of the Divine Will, to an extent far exceeding anything which would have been possible to them alone? The Divine Presence is always there; the gathering together of the faithful is not a magic spell which attracts to a particular spot what was previously absent, but it may and does enable them individually to realize and appropriate that which was always there, and enables them to see clearly what before was hidden by a veil."

To sum up, therefore, we shall say that public, corporate worship, which our Prayer Book attempts to express and give, while mysterious, as must be all intercourse with the Infinite, is simply the attitude and act of man, sensible of God's presence and feeling God's worth. Now this feeling and its expression may take many forms. Whatever is natural for a child of God to think and do in the felt presence of his Father is a form of worship. It may be confession of sin, as he sees himself and his past life in the presence of God's holiness; it may be the yearning to know of God's nature and will, as revealed and heard in his Word, whether God is forgiving or not, loving or not; it may be fervent petition for some benefit sought or it may be a burst of praise, in the face of his glory. These are all aspects, or parts, of worship. It is to the consideration of the question whether, and if so, how, our Prayer Book gives fitting expression to this worship, as we have defined it, that the following pages are devoted.

III

But before we take up the study of the Book itself, a few words are necessary on the need and method of expressing this worshipful attitude in act. The ideal worship is before us: and the ideal is always the real. But the ideal must have its visible, concrete expression. What the soul feels in the presence of God must come out in some form. Just as the ideal man must take flesh, just as the

ideal Church must take form in the organized and visible church, just as the organized church must express and perform its functions through a ministry, so the Church's desire to worship God must find for itself some outward, and organized and authoritative expression.

We encounter here two conflicting theories which must be discussed before we can understand the principle on which our Prayer Book is framed as a vehicle of expression and a guide to our common worship.

A genius for comprehension is one of the marks of our church. This may and sometimes does degenerate into mere compromise, but at its best it means giving fair play to contradictions, allowing each its chance and holding both to be essential to the perfect whole.

In this matter of worship one man feeling intensely the spiritual in his intercourse with God, even in its public form, regards the quiet of silence as the only worshipful atmosphere. He regards as distracting and intrusive any motions, or sounds, and would worship him who is Spirit only in spirit. Thus the so-called Quaker thinks and he is being joined by many in our own church, who appreciate and depend more and more upon services of silence to feed their souls and render spiritual worship to God.

At the other extreme one sees the service of the Holy Orthodox, or Eastern Church, and notes the elaboration of posture and act, of music and incense, each act full of meaning and the whole of worship

strikingly dramatic and appealing to the senses by every avenue. Any error in act or word vitiates the worship.

In which of these two ways should we worship God? In neither, but in both, using each to curb the other, and finding only so the full expression of all the soul desires when it comes to meet God. To take two very loosely defined and much misunderstood terms, let us call the first of these the Puritan and the other the Ritualistic position. Both are right, but only when joined, both as extremes and alone fail to express the whole heart of man's worship. For man is body and spirit and as the body without the spirit is dead, so the spirit without the body is dumb and expressionless. In this world, certainly, neither is without the other, though one may be higher than the other. Just as the government is not the denial of the primary fact of the sovereignty of the people, but makes it operative, just as the organized church with its appointed ministry is no denial of the priesthood of all believers, so the outward forms and symbolisms of our worship are no contradiction to the truth of the spiritual access to God. As a matter of fact, they are absolutely necessary for the appreciation and expression of the larger truth.

The danger to the Puritan is that his worship after a while dies of inanition, for that which is unexpressed dies; while the danger to the Ritualist is that he, after a while, dies of a surfeit because the body has become to him more than the soul.

There should be no question of partisanship with regard to what is called Ritualism. For that only

means the science of Rites, of any sort, plain or ornate, and even in its ordinary meaning to-day is only the use of symbolic emblems and acts to express spiritual things.

According to this definition, we are all ritualists because we are human and we cannot express the spiritual in us save by the use of symbols. The Puritan is a ritualist when he permits the sweet tones of the organ to lull him with a response; he is a ritualist when he stands to sing a hymn or bows his head in prayer. The "Low" churchman who wears his surplice in a cruciform church and lifts his hand in blessing over his congregation, is a ritualist, for he is making use of symbols, as he must, to express the otherwise inexpressible.

On the other hand we must remember that any act of worship is not only expressed towards God as adoration, but has its reflex action towards the worshiper as education. And just as we may be sure God wishes us to worship him not only in spirit but in truth, so we must be very careful that what we are doing in church trains us in the truth. For that is, or should be, the basis of any objection that may be felt to much that is called Ritualism. It is not its use of symbols that is objectionable, but its use of symbols to express that which our church has repudiated and deems false. The symbols and symbolic acts must not be used to express a theory of transubstantiation; they must not set forth a false sacerdotalism. If Ritualism means these things, it is bad, but not as ritualism, simply as untruth and so disloyalty. If what it does in church means nothing, then it is petty, unworthy and ir-

reverent. If it is used to teach error, it is worse than this. But when it expresses the truth of the child's loving approach to his Father, then the more we have of it the better, art in all its branches to beautify our churches, and adorn our services, the most expressive and affecting liturgy we can compose or compile, using all the riches of the past and calling in all the contributions of the present.

Does our Prayer Book, in word and act, fulfill all these demands, and if so, how?

SUGGESTED READING

Freeman: The Principles of Divine Service.
Gratacap: Philosophy of Ritual.

II

THE BOOK ITSELF

I

THE method of treating the Prayer Book pursued in this book is primarily *descriptive*. It is an attempt, in a simple way, to describe what manner of book it is which we hold in our hands. It assumes that we do hold it in our hands, and use it, as members of the worshiping congregation. That other methods of treatment make a strong appeal is not denied. The *historical* method, which deals with the origins of the book, and reveals its sources, has its fascinations. The book is so full of history that its use as a manual for teaching the history of the Christian Church is conceivable, and might well prove helpful. The *apologetic* method, which would seek to commend it to those who worship, and yet do not use the Prayer Book, is a valuable method in unearthing its hidden treasures. The *practical* method, which would employ it as a manual for the teaching of worship, or religious expression, is a method full of possibilities for realizing and strengthening the religious life. The *normal* method would unfold its excellencies as a text-book for the teaching of teachers, who are called upon to train children in its use, and to help

them to the knowledge of how to worship, is a much needed exercise. But the present attempt is purely descriptive. In being descriptive, it will, of necessity, be not altogether forgetful of other possible methods and their demands. It cannot avoid the appeal to the basis in history, nor can it, if it would, avoid the remembrance of those who worship according to its forms, or who are engaged in teaching the Church's children, or those to whom its power and inspiration are unknown; and with this remembrance there dwells the hope, at the heart of the description, that what is here written may bring new light and new power of expression to all who worship, to the increase in them of true religion.

II

What then is the Book of Common Prayer? In the first place, it is not a book at all, but a library of books, bound together to make one volume. It is this very same description, applied to the Bible, which has done so much, as a starting point, to restore the Bible to this generation, as a source of power and inspiration. Setting out from this description, Christians of to-day have come into an understanding of the richness which is revealed to them through the results of the Higher Criticism, and have at the same time been released from the blighting effects of regarding the Bible as a fetich, possessed of an authority which is infallible, but at the same time incomprehensible, and inapplicable to the soul's needs. In a similar way, starting from the conception of a library, we are led to apprehend

the riches of the Book of Common Prayer, and to discover its unrealized treasures of helpfulness for the worshiper, while we are at the same time freed from the superstition of regarding it as the Churchman's sacred fetich, not to be touched or altered, and to be honored by empty phrases as to its incomparable excellence, rather than used with intelligence and freedom, to the soul's health.

What are the books which make up this library? They are five in number, and are arranged in this order.

1. *The Book of Daily Offices,* or *Services;* or (to use one word of Latin and ancient origin) the *Breviary*. This book contains Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and the Litany, together with certain Prayers and Thanksgivings, for occasional insertion in these above named services.

2. *The Book of the Holy Communion,* or *Missal.* This book contains the Divine Liturgy, or Order for the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, together with the Collects, Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays and Holy Days of the year, which are to be inserted in that service.

3. *The Book of Offices for Special Occasions,* or the *Manual,* or *Minister's Hand Book*. This book contains the services for Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony, Churching of Women, Visitation and Communion of the Sick and Burial of the Dead, — following the course of an individual Christian's life, with offices of the Church's benediction upon that life's experiences from birth to death.

4. *The Book of Psalms, or the Psalter,* a Bible book, extracted and printed here, for convenience,

since the Psalms are so constantly used in the Church's services; and given substantially in the ancient translation of the Great Bible of 1539, the work of that master of the English tongue, Coverdale, "a translation of a poet, and not of a dictionary," and preserved in our Prayer Book, in preference to later, more accurate translations, because of its adaptability for musical rendering, and because its simple and forcible vocabulary and beautiful rhythm endear it to the people.

5. *The Book of Forms for Ordination,* or the *Ordinal.*

III

The first question which occurs to one in regard to the contents of the volume as thus given, is why it is made to contain so much. It is primarily a Book of Common Prayer, that is to say, a handbook for the worshiping congregation. For the people's use only the first two books are needed, together with the Psalter, for the sake of convenience. These books supply all that is required by worshipers from day to day. Why bind up with these books, the priest's book, containing the Baptismal and other offices, and the Bishop's book, containing the services of ordination? The answer to this question is to be found, in the first instance, by reference to the temper of the Reformation-time, out of which our English Prayer Book came into being. The watchword of the Reformation is immediacy of relationship. The soul is to approach God directly, without the intrusion of mediatorial priestliness. The Church belongs to the people.

The worship is theirs, and is to be in their own language. It is not expedient, nor is it edifying that the priest should have a book of his own, nor the bishop his special book. The rites and ceremonies which concern the life of the people, the ordinations of the people's ministers, must be in their own hands, open to their knowledge and understanding, free for their constant reading and study, designed for their participation. These offices are not merely to be heard occasionally, and participated in solely by the people's presence, nor liable to the clergyman's unguarded discretion. They concern intimately the development of the individual worshiper's life — especially the Manual, which, in its offices, touches upon the great moments of Christian experience. The principle is a sound one, and is likely to preserve the book intact in its present general outline and inclusiveness.

IV

Another question which occurs to one who turns the pages of the Prayer Book, with the above outline in mind, is as to the omissions in that outline. Not all which is to be found between the covers of the book is mentioned. This is true. The outline of the Five Books as printed above is not exhaustive. It is general, covering the essential points.

Let us consider the omissions.

a. In Book I, no mention was made of the *Penitential Office*. This Office does not properly belong in this place. It is occasional, in the sense that it is designed primarily for one day, Ash

Wednesday. It is comparable to the Office for Thanksgiving Day, which is now printed in the Manual, with the other occasional offices. In the rearrangement of the Prayer Book, which is contemplated in connection with the revision of the book now in process, the Penitential Office will doubtless be removed from Book I to Book III. It is true that there is a double use of the word *occasional,* in this connection, which is somewhat confusing. The Penitential Office is an occasional congregational service,— while the occasional offices proper are not congregational in the same sense, but rather personal. There is, however, no separate book of Occasional Offices of the Congregation, and a place for the Penitential Office at the end of Book III is better than its present position in Book I.

b. In Book III, the following offices were omitted in the outline, viz.: The Catechism, Forms of Prayer at Sea, Visitation of Prisoners, Thanksgiving Day Services, Family Prayer. In regard to them, these things are to be noted.

1. *The Catechism.* The first and most obvious thing to say about the Catechism is that it seems out of place in a book of worship. This is true whether we consider it as a hand-book for the education of the young, or as a brief compendium of theological teaching. But it is also true that it is interwoven with the two offices for Special Occasions between which it stands, viz.: Baptism and Confirmation, and is referred to in both these offices. For this reason it is likely to remain where it is, unless these offices are radically revised. Such revision is certainly needed in the case of Baptism,

and is greatly to be desired. It is further to be remarked that the Catechism has old and treasured associations with many users of the Book of Common Prayer, and is not without significance as a symbol of the consecration of education in the unfolding of the Christian life. These reasons, together with certain excellencies of statement in the Catechism itself, add to the likelihood of its continued inclusion, in some form, within the book.

2. The *Forms of Prayer to be used at sea,*— and the *Form for the Visitation of Prisoners* have nothing to commend them as offices, and their contents in general are archaic and not helpful in meeting the needs of the Church to-day. Both forms, with the exception of certain prayers, will doubtless be dropped from the book at the next revision.

3. The *Thanksgiving Day Service* has no features which require its printing as a separate office. Its excellent suggestions and lessons, sentences, canticles and prayers, as well as collect, epistle and gospel, can be distributed to the different places in the book where they naturally belong, the office itself in this way disappearing, while all of value that it contains is preserved.

4. *Forms of Prayer to be used in Families.* It may be decidedly useful to include within the volume of the people's book of worship, a suggested form for Family Prayer. It would be, moreover, unfortunate to discourage a practice already sufficiently discouraged, by dropping this material from the book. But it has no place in the Manual, or book of Special Offices, and is easily lost sight of, where it stands. The suggestion is a good one to

dignify it with a separate title page, to enlarge it somewhat by adding certain prayers, and to place it outside the Prayer Book proper (so making it amenable to easier revision) — but just inside the back cover of the volume. The forms as they now stand in the book are, it is true, old-fashioned, and of a fashion not belonging to the days of the happiest liturgical expression. These forms have, however, a certain flavor and suggestiveness of their own, and with slight revision, are capable of being used helpfully and appealingly. When combined with prayers of more immediate reference to to-day's conditions and needs, they ought to form a little book of family prayer of great usefulness, and serve to commend a practice to which our people ought to return.

c. In Book V, no mention was made in the Outline of the *Form of Consecration of a Church,* and the *Office of Institution of Ministers.* This was with the intention of emphasizing the important contents of this book, the ordination services. The inclusion of these two offices in the book makes of it a *Pontifical,* or Bishop's Book, rather than an *Ordinal,* the title chosen. Of course, a Bishop's Book proper would also, in order to serve the bishop's convenience, include the other service which peculiarly belongs to him, the Confirmation Service. But it is important and helpful in a people's book that this office should stand with the other offices in Book III, which so vitally concern the Christian's personal religious life. The two offices mentioned above are peculiar to the American Prayer Book. While open to some criticisms, when compared with

the best liturgical standards, they possess dignity, and contain some excellent material. This is especially true of the *Office for the Consecration of a Church*. Moreover, they represent occasions for the bishop's presence which are of very real significance in the life of the congregation. They were conceived to be the two occasions of deepest concern recurring in a parish's history; and, on the whole, this judgment must stand approved. It is undoubtedly true, if the American Church ever authorizes a *Book of Offices* (a book which would conceivably contain offices for the Laying of a Corner Stone, for the Dedication of a Parish House, Rectory, or Hospital, for the Benediction of Memorials, etc.), that these two services will be transferred to such book, leaving the Ordinal to stand by itself. Meantime, they will remain where they are now, a part of Book V.

The *Litany* and *Holy Communion* now printed in Book V are there because they were needed there in connection with ordinations, when this book was bound by itself as a separate book. Now that it is bound up with the other books, they are not needed, since they are provided in a more convenient form elsewhere, and these will doubtless be removed from the revised Prayer Book.

V

There is to be found in the Book of Common Prayer, besides the five books which represent its real contents, still other material. There stands printed, at the beginning, the prefatory matter, and at the end, the Articles of Religion.

a. *The Prefatory Matter.* This matter, besides a descriptive title page, and a table of contents, which things are common to books in general, includes first of all the Ratification of the book by the new-born American Church of 1789, together with the interesting and illuminating preface of the same date. There then follow these items for the convenience of users of the book.

1. Tables of Proper Psalms and Lessons, as suggested for certain days and seasons.
2. Tables of Feasts and Fasts.
3. General directions as to the services of the Church.

In addition to these convenient directions and tables, there is included in this prefatory matter certain tables for finding the date of Easter, including tables for finding the Dominical Letter. These present a difficult and mysterious study to the average man, who is without mathematical or astronomical leanings, and seem of doubtful value in a people's book of worship. It is recorded of Dr. Hart, the late custodian of the book, to whom the Church is indebted for helpful teaching about the Prayer Book, based upon a careful and sympathetic study of its history, that he strongly advocated the retention of the tables in the volume as a sort of symbol of mystery, a pledge of those hidden treasures of the volume, which are the reward of the patient student and constant user.

b. *The Articles of Religion.* There can be, of course, no liturgical excuse for the retention of the Articles in our Book of Worship. They are an interesting exhibit of an attempt at theological defi-

nition dating from Reformation times. They do not express, in many instances, the thoughts of men to-day on the great themes with which they deal. When they do express these thoughts, they express them in an outgrown language. They are not "binding," as a prerequisite for membership or office in the Church, upon either clergy or people. What keeps them in the book is a vague feeling that they express a spirit which their excision might seem to deny, and which no one wishes to deny,—the spirit of freedom, which is the supreme heritage of the Reformation, and that attitude towards the life of the Christian and of the Christian Church which makes our Church a Reformed Church.

VI

The stranger to our Church's forms of worship sometimes finds the Prayer Book a puzzling book through which to find one's way. It seems at times to this stranger that the book is specially designed to make the finding of one's place practically impossible. It must be confessed that there are certain inevitable difficulties, in the use of a book of worship, which cannot be overcome. Its very genius, expressed in its use of varying, or alternating, or of varyingly appropriate forms or selections, renders a certain amount of turning back and forth inevitable. All that the lover of the book can say to the bewildered novice is that it is worth all the study and trouble he can give, to learn how to use it, and to discover, with pains if need be, its riches.

At the same time, it is certainly to be desired

that in its arrangement it should be as simple and convenient as possible. To this end, certain changes in its present make-up are recommended. These are, in the first place, to move the Collects, Epistles and Gospels from their position before the Order for the Holy Communion to a place immediately following that service. The result will be that the four great services of constant congregational use, Morning and Evening Prayer, Litany and Holy Communion, will stand together in the first part of the book. The Prayers and Thanksgivings, it is suggested, should come between the two Daily Offices and the Litany, into which services they are most commonly introduced. This will bring the Litany to a position immediately before the Holy Communion, a place not without appropriateness, since it is frequently used as a preparation for Holy Communion. That the Manual, the book of occasional offices which most closely concern the people, should follow, as it does, the two books which comprise the people's congregational offices is appropriate.

It is true that the Psalter is in a sense primarily associated with the Daily Offices, and might for that reason stand next to the first book. It is also true that Psalms are being increasingly used as Introits to the Holy Communion in Book II, and are required in some of the offices of Book III, and it is probable that the present place of the Psalter is the most convenient one, while its bulk, if introduced next the Daily Offices, would break up the helpful juxtaposition of the great services of the people's worship.

III

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

GROWTH AND COMPREHENSION

I

BY the Principle of Growth is not meant the fact of growth. The fact of growth is unquestioned. Our present Prayer Book has grown, through a process covering many years, into the book it is to-day. This fact really reveals a growing principle in the book itself, which makes it a living book. The Principle of Growth is based upon the fact that our American Prayer Book is the result of four processes of revision extending through three centuries. It is based upon the fact that the Book has gathered up, and contains within itself precious treasures out of the experience in worship of past ages. And this very fact is in itself an assurance of new treasures to come out of new experiences, and of formal and deliberate revisions, as in the past, so also in the future. The Prayer Book is not an historical relic. It is not a monument to the manners in worship and pious observance of a defunct religion. It is the continuing hand-book of a living religion. Its revisability, its adaptability, its readiness to absorb new material and to redis-

cover old, its inherent principle of growth, this it is which is the pledge of the Prayer Book's vitality.

The first of the four great revisions is the Prayer Book of Elizabeth in 1559, the *Revision of the Reformation*. The outstanding fact about it is that it is a Book of Worship in the *English language*. Henceforth the Prayer Book is to be the people's book, in their own tongue, and in their own hands. The five books which constitute it had been previously five Latin books. They had been the books of the priests, or of the technically "religious." They are now to belong to all Christ's people, all the Church's children. The first service to become Englished was the Litany, and rightly, as the most markedly of all services the people's service. This had been set forth in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

The other outstanding fact was that it was the book of a Reformed Church. It undertook to correct Roman abuses in worship and practice. It was not only a translation into the simplicity and understandableness of the people's spoken language; it was also a translation out of the accretions and remotenesses of a scholastic and sacerdotal system into the simplicity and immediacy of the Christian fellowship of primitive tradition, when the Church was the people's Church.

The book of Elizabeth was itself the final outcome of the Reformation process. There had been two books immediately preceding it in the reign of Edward VI. The first book of Edward VI had been the book of the more traditional or Catholic cast. The second book of Edward VI was the book of a more pronouncedly Protestant hue. The

final book represented the completion of the task of revision. It became the book of the English church, and continues, in spite of some further revision, that Church's book to-day. We have spoken of the two outstanding facts of the Reformation Revision; but we are not to forget that it was a revision. We are not celebrating the creation of a new book. It was the old book, or books, with the genius of their services, in the main, preserved, and with their great utterances in prayer and praise, marvelously enshrined in the unequaled English of the period. For this we are indebted to the great translators of the Bible into English,— and especially are we indebted to the genius of Cranmer.

The second of the four revisions was the Book of 1662, the *Revision of the Restoration*. After the years of Cromwell, and the period of Puritan supremacy, upon the occasion of the return of the Stuarts and the rehabilitation of Episcopacy, a revision of the Prayer Book was undertaken and carried through. While the changes were very numerous, they were all minor changes, and the revision represents no fundamental principles, as was the case a hundred years before.

The third great revision is the revision of 1789, the date of our first American book. This is the *Revision of the Revolution*. In a new land, in the face of new conditions, the temper of the revision was radical. The revisers were willing to consider everything. It is true that the resultant changes were not very numerous or very great, but we are not to be misled into imagining that the business in hand was principally to substitute the word Presi-

dent for the word King. The Communion office was vitally altered. One of the Creeds (the Athanasian) was dropped. There was talk of dropping the Nicene Creed. The Apostles' Creed was amended. Nothing was sacrosanct. The needs of the people were paramount. Language was altered, to be more intelligent, or rhythmical, or more consonant with an American sense of humor. It happened that the two leaders in the movement were representative of the two elements, whose comprehension had been the supreme task of the Reformation book. These were Bishop Seabury, the Catholic-minded, and Bishop White, the Protestant-minded. To the former we are indebted for the splendid revision of the Communion Service, and to the latter for insistence upon the liberties and sanities that the hour demanded, and also for a fortunate ear for phrase and rhythm, comparable to Cranmer's great gifts along these lines.

The fourth revision is that of 1892, the *Revision of Enrichment*,— which we may write en-Richment, in order to secure the four R's of the four revisions. Here again was a revision of details, as in 1662, rather than a revision of radicalism. It was a period of hesitancy and timidity. There was a great and widespread fear that doctrine might be undermined, or the precious heritage of the great book impaired. The outstanding figure in the work was that of Dr. Huntington, who brought to the task great enthusiasm and wisdom, and who won, through his generous tactfulness, and parliamentary prowess, the confidence of the whole church. His controlling thought and desire was for the unity

of the Church, the unity of American Christianity, and he believed that the Prayer Book, if revised to meet present day needs, would prove a potent influence to bring about the sought-for end. He possessed, furthermore, that indispensable quality for the task of revision, a keen liturgical sense, and a sensitive ear and unerring touch, combined with the necessary facility and yet reticence in expression. It has been said that after the careful labors of twelve years, from 1880 to 1892, the result was, after all, insignificant. There is truth in this, but when we remember the difficulties of the undertaking at that time, and look to the effect of having accomplished revision at all, rather than to specified results, the work is to be recognized as highly significant, not only for our own Church, but for the whole Anglican communion. Moreover, the detailed changes have more than justified themselves.

It will be noticed that the four revisions are almost exactly a hundred years apart, and also that they alternate as between radical and detailed revisions. Because of the time periods, probably, it came to pass that after 1892, it was freely prophesied that the business of revision was over for a hundred years at least. Subsequent events have not verified this prophecy. Times and occasions change rapidly in these later years, and instead of a century, a generation only marks the beginning of a new process of revision. If we count a generation as thirty-three years, it is exactly that between the inauguration of revision in 1880 and the appointment of the present Commission on Revision in 1913. Moreover, it looks as if the principle of al-

ternation were to hold, and as if a radical revision were in contemplation. The temper of the Church is manifestly to the effect that everything is open to consideration, and possible amendment or revision, and this temper is encouraged and strengthened by the lessons of the Great War. It is not meant by this that the faith of the Church is shaken, or to be altered. Nor is it meant that the services of chief moment, the great services of the congregation, are to be changed in their general outline or content. It is meant, rather, that the needs of the religious life of men are paramount, and that they must be met by a flexibility in forms never even contemplated before, by new expressions in prayer to meet new requirements and aspirations, and by radical revision of the special offices, for Baptism, Marriage and Burial and the like, where the demand for change is insistent and universal.

The record of the great revisions is the record of such formal or official changes as illustrate the principle of growth. But that principle is realized even more clearly in a larger outlook, which remembers how the book has gathered up into itself the religious forms and prayer and praise utterances of the ages. All the Christian centuries have left their marks upon it. Phrases and prayer utterances go back to the Fathers of the first centuries, and liturgical forms like the "Sursum Corda," the "Lift up your hearts" of the Communion Service, are derived from the very earliest times. The terse and pregnant clauses of the collects reflect the Latin genius of the centuries when the church of Rome dominated. The devotional utterances of the Re-

formation time, with the freshness of its religious awakening, find a place. There are reminiscences, sometimes ancient, sometimes more modern, which rejoice in a method of repetitional phrases, for emphasis or elucidation. There are suggestions of the impress of later devotional thought and expression, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even to our own times.

More than this, there lie imbedded in the book the religious influences of the synagogue, as well as all the wealth of Jewish devotion, especially in the Psalms, or in the derivations or suggestions which spring from them. And what is good in approaches to worship or methods of expression in heathen rites, the Eleusinian mysteries, or other forms, has left its impress. Still further, there is formal adoption, and sanctification of those attitudes and gestures of the worshiping soul, which antedate all formal religions, and whose remote sources we cannot even guess. Such are the bended knees of prayer, the erect pose of praise and of prayer too, and the hands of blessing upon the head, with their downward palms. It is good to remember these things. The book testifies, indeed, upon its every page, to its inherent principle of growth.

And this principle, as we look back, teaches us to turn about, and to look forward. This, its fundamental principle, is a pledge to us that is to take up into itself in times to come, sufficing expression of the newer aspirations of religion, the developing needs of worship. To-day, religious experience finds common expression in the realization of God in nature, in the enthusiasms for education and

philanthropy and social reform, in the expanding and soul-stirring activities of missionary zeal and world federation. These must find fuller utterance in the people's book of worship. We may rest assured that they will find such utterance, and that other forms of expression in prayer and praise, which our present-day imagination cannot compass, will find their place within the Book of Common Prayer.

II

The second fundamental principle of the Prayer Book is the Principle of Comprehension. By comprehension is meant neither comprehensibility, nor yet comprehensiveness. It connotes something special. It is based, this principle, upon the happenings out of which the English Prayer Book issued. It represents that great experiment in the life and worship of the church which specifically characterizes the historic church of English-speaking peoples. It consists, where there are two differing and divergent, even to all appearance contradictory views, in the refusal to choose the one or the other, or to compromise between them, and in the insistence upon embracing both, each in its fullness. It is the pledge of catholicity.

The problem which faced the Church of England at the time of the Reformation was the problem of maintaining a national church for the people of England, and a church which should include all the people. It must embrace within itself the Catholic-minded and the Protestant-minded,— the two sides, which were represented in the great struggle.

There must be room, and ample and satisfying room, for those who loved and held by the ancient traditions, and forms and usages of the past, and for those who keenly resented the errors which had crept into the ancient church, and whose minds and souls were strongly set against the perversions in truth and practice which characterized, they believed, a corrupted order. The Church of England set itself resolutely to the task with a conscious determination, and with a will to be fair and to succeed. There were leaders of the people, to whose patience and wisdom the success of the great experiment was in large measure due. The resultant Prayer Book of the reign of Elizabeth, which had been preceded by the Catholic-minded book of Edward VI, the first of that reign, and by the Protestant-minded book, the second, is an eloquent tribute to the genius of those to whom the task was entrusted, and to the purpose and will of the people of the land, which sustained them. For that book remains substantially, after all, the book of to-day. It continues, after four centuries, the book alike of Catholic-minded and Protestant-minded worshipers,— used and loved by all. In practically every service, one might almost say on every page, it bears its witness to the great experiment, or rather to the great success, to the triumphant principle of comprehension.

In the unfolding of the Church Year, those Catholic-minded people, who would find there days of Mary, may find them in the Annunciation and Purification, while those same days are to the Protestant-minded, days of our Lord, as indeed they are. In

the Baptism offices, the Catholic doctrine of regeneration, and the Protestant insistence upon repentance and faith stand side by side; and the sign of the Cross, or its omission, are equally recognized. In the Confirmation service are to be found both the Catholic-minded emphasis upon the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Protestant conception of the renewal of vows. In the Ordination of Priests, there are two sentences of ordination provided as alternates, one for the Catholic, the other for the Protestant. Formerly there stood in the Litany the ultra Catholic suffrage: "Saint Mary, Mother of God, all holy patriarchs and prophets, Pray for us," and the ultra Protestant prayer:—"From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, Good Lord, deliver us." Both have now been happily eliminated by mutual and glad consent, since they contravened rather than exemplified the principle.

The central and all sufficient example of the principle lies at the heart of the book, at the solemn moment of the distribution of the elements in the Holy Communion. The Catholic-minded book of Edward VI had the Catholic-minded sentence of distribution: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." The Protestant-minded book of Edward VI had the Protestant-minded sentence, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart, by faith, with thanksgiving." The solution was to say both (as they stand in both sentences to-day), one after the other. There was no decision of

choice. There was no compromise, by so much as an iota. There was perfect application of the Principle of Comprehension. We have here its complete exposition. And the great double sentence stands in the book of worship as the final justification of the principle, and as the enduring monument to the genius of the book.

III

The two principles, of Growth and Comprehension, have obviously an intimate relation. In their interplay is the guarantee of the book's endurance, and the indication of the possibility for growth through successful revision. When it is urged, in any consideration of the book's revision, that doctrine must not be touched, it is to be remembered that what is meant is, that the sacred and fundamental principle of comprehension must not, by so much as a jot or tittle, be impaired. There must continue to exist, within the book's scope, for Catholic-minded and Protestant-minded alike, the fullest opportunity for freedom and satisfaction in worship. Nothing must be done to cause either to feel less at home. The long-maintained union in the common worship of the Church must not be jeopardized.

IV

THE THREE WORKING PRINCIPLES

I

BESIDES the two fundamental principles which underlie the whole structure of the book, there are certain Working Principles which are essential to its intelligent and helpful using. The first of these is the Principle of Interpretation. The necessity for the application of this principle rests in the circumstance that by its very nature, a book of worship embodies within it forms and expressions which are ancient, and which continue unaltered through generations, and indeed centuries. Such forms and expressions are the things which first of all commend the book to the user, and make of it a treasury of devotion. At the same time, their very presence demands, if the ancient utterances are to be realities for modern experiences, that there should be a working principle of interpretation. The principle is based upon the fact that our preservation of ancient forms of expression, which secure to us the historic sense, and the grateful feeling of oneness with Christ's people of all ages, necessitates the filling and re-filling of these forms with the thoughts and experiences and convictions of to-day, the immediate utterances of the Holy Spirit to the

Church. Flexibility of interpretation becomes of the essence of creed and liturgy. The principle of interpretation is for us the pledge of reality. It is not necessary to multiply illustrations, but a moment's thought serves to convince us that we are constantly called upon to exercise this principle. A familiar illustration, often referred to, is the clause in the creed, "the resurrection of the body." The original concept of the resuscitation of flesh and bones has become universally untenable. Behind the concept was a faith which endures in the persistence of the individual. There are new concepts, as to the methods of this persistence, and the words are reinterpreted to fit these, and that without great difficulty or embarrassment. The collects use not infrequently legalistic language in regard to God and his dealings, which springs out of Latin concepts. The concepts are no longer ours, but we interpret the language to fit our new and as we believe better thoughts. We turn expressions which belonged to a Calvinistic and outgrown doctrine of original sin, to fit our modern notions of heredity. In the Marriage Service we keep on saying, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"—although we strongly repudiate the chattel notion regarding woman, out of which the words sprang,—because we interpret it as a gracious opportunity for recognition of the father's love and protecting care. The process is familiar to Christians of every name in the use of hymns. We continue to use hymns, just because they are old and familiar, or beautiful in form or expression, or wedded to an appealing and singable tune, which teach a theology

or even a morality which we repudiate. We do it, because we interpret the words. By use of the principle of interpretation we get to the heart of the first singer's faith, and cast aside his transient beliefs and dogmas. We love especially the "heavenly Jerusalem" hymns, though other worldliness is not our dominant mood, because we interpret them into promises and determinations of social reform.

It is not to be denied that interpretation is not always easy. Sometimes the process is a strain. We endure it, because of the gain that outweighs, and which is the sense of fellowship with past ages which the persisting words supply, because of the inspiration that comes through realization of our oneness with all saints. When the strain is too great, then we cease to sing the hymn, or strive for amendment and revision of the form of words. But such cases are on the whole few, and even where revision seems most imperative, we patiently apply our principle, remembering that the process of revision is necessarily slow, where the whole Christian consciousness is concerned.

II

A second principle is the Principle of Rubrication. This principle is based upon the fact that the rubric is not a law, to be obeyed, but a suggestion or direction, to be followed when applicable. Fidelity to the principle consists in a reasonable following of directions where they are appropriate, in distinction from a blind obedience to the letter

which killeth. If one enters the great gates of a park he may discover a rubric, or sign board, which says, "Take this path to the lion's den." The form of words is mandatory, but the visitor will not obey the rubric if the lion's den is a place where he does not wish to go. We are not to be misled by the mandatory form of rubrics. They are not laws, requiring obedience, or in relation to which obedience is a virtue. The verb "shall" in a rubric does not connote an order, but an opportunity. It makes a suggestion. When the word "may" stands in its place, there are two suggestions offered, either one of which is good, the choice to be determined by circumstances. Much difficulty might be avoided, if this essential nature of the rubric were always remembered. It would serve to relieve some ministers of a certain false pride in "always obeying the rubrics," by making it clear that this is far from being a virtue. It is obvious that due regard to their intention, and genuine apprehension of the genius of the Prayer Book, will require at times "disobedience." And as for the people, it will correct an unjustly critical attitude towards a minister who has disregarded a rubric, and substitute for it satisfaction in the fact that the leader of the worship is intelligent, and knows the value and purpose of rubrical directions. One illustration will suffice. Let us suppose that the circumstances of a congregation's life and environment make the one service of Good Friday an evening service. The strict rubrical provision will compel the reading of the two lessons for Good Friday evening. But these are appointed on the assump-

tion that the morning lessons, and epistle and gospel, have been read and heard. This is not the case in this instance, and Good Friday demands, if it demands anything, that the people hear the story of the cross. The minister will read this. He will be true to the genius of the Prayer Book. He will disregard the rubric, because it is not applicable. He will recognize the fact that in this case disobedience is the truest obedience.

It was an English bishop who wrote: "I long to see a plain recognition of the fact that rubrics are not canons, i.e., a rubric records simply how things *are* done (i.e., unless there is valid reason for some other course), and that it is the function of a canon to prescribe how things *shall* be done." And we are not to think that the definition contained in his words is merely a pious wish, rather than a statement based upon historic and verifiable fact. This is just what the rubric historically is,— a direction in regard to the conduct of the service. It is nevertheless true that the confusion and misunderstanding which have arisen have their roots in English history. Because of the laws of conformity, the rubrics in England have become acts of Parliament, and therefore laws. We in America are free from this unfortunate situation, and may vindicate in our usage the rubric's original character. At the same time, because our church is descended from the English, it has come to pass that included among the rubrics of our Prayer Book, — the true rubrics,— are certain rubrics which are not really rubrics at all, but bits of canon law. Such, for instance, is the rubric forbidding the use

of the Burial Office for suicides,— a relic of mediæval casuistry. Obviously, the presence of such rubrics tends to obscure the rubric's real nature, and to militate against the principle of rubrication. It is also because of the presence of rubrics of this nature that the law of the Church recognizes as an offense for which a minister may be tried "the violation of the rubrics." It is manifest that there could be no such thing as trial for the violation of a true rubric. The situation presents a dilemma which ought to be frankly stated. It might seem desirable to remove from the Book of Worship all fragments of canon law, leaving only the true rubrics. But, on the other hand, to put such fragments of canon law in the law book would deprive them of the innocuous character they now enjoy, and which it may be desirable to preserve. As it is, they necessarily partake of the rubric character, and may be open to such following as is properly given to rubrical directions. To revert to the illustration of the park, there may exist like inconsistencies there; for adjacent to the rubric concerning the lion's den is one which reads, "Keep off the grass," and which, if representing a city ordinance, may well be a law.

One thing is certain. The American Church has an opportunity to rehabilitate and emphasize the true rubric, and users of the Prayer Book must build upon the principle of rubrication, which is a pledge for us of liberty and flexibility.

III

The third principle is the Principle of Liturgism. Liturgism is a coined word, but convenient and understandable. It is designed to emphasize the fact that users of the Prayer Book to be intelligent must remember that its genius is that it supplies an instrument of worship which is in a special sense liturgical. There are three sorts of worship. There is the "free worship" which characterizes the Protestant Communions generally, and which emphasizes the "word" to the exclusion of the "act." It is that familiar type of congregational service, in which the sermon is everything, the other parts of the service being of the nature of "preliminary exercises." The people are passive. They are ensconced in a sitting posture for the purpose of listening, that being the main object of their gathering. Theoretically, the parts of the preliminary exercises are free, in that they are not appointed or ordered. The minister reads from the "Word" where his instinct, or momentary choice, dictates. He, or the people, "start" a hymn of praise. He, or they, pray as the spirit moves, out of the momentary dictates of the heart.

There is the "ritualistic worship," which characterizes the Church of Rome, and the Orthodox Churches of Russia and the East, and which emphasizes the "act" to the exclusion of the "word." The important thing is that the sacrifice shall be offered. The miracle of the Mass is to be accomplished. The bell rings to announce that the act

is done. It does not matter that the words which may be said are in a language not "understanded of the people." It does not matter if there is no sermon. The people are again passive. Their part is to assist by their presence. In Browning's "The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's," the Bishop says:

> "And then how I shall lie through centuries
> And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
> And see God made and eaten all day long,
> And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
> Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!"

This suggests the ideal of the ritualistic service, and emphasizes its materialistic perils, when the "act" is made supreme, and the "word" subordinated.

The third sort of service, which is the normal service of the Book of Common Prayer, is the "liturgical service." Its aim is to emphasize equally the word and the act, maintaining them in their due proportion as complementary one to the other. It seeks to avoid the vagaries and individualism of the "free service," with its loss of the sense of the common Christian consciousness, and its dangers of cold intellectualism, and irreverence, and at the same time to escape the formalities, and mindlessness, and possible materialism and irreverences of the "ritualistic service." In worship, as in other ways, the Church of the Prayer Book has a mission of reconciliation. It has a "via media" ambition, and strives for a sanity and sweet-reasonableness in worship, which shall preserve what is good in the

ideals of both the Protestant Communions, and the ancient churches of Rome and the East, and explain them to one another.

Of course, an epigrammatic definition such as has been attempted above has its dangers of half-truth. It cannot be strictly maintained that either the free or ritualistic service is represented with complete fairness. There cannot be, obviously, complete subordination of act or word, either in the one or in the other. But there is truth, nevertheless, in the attempted distinction, and the ideal and method of the Prayer Book are made sufficiently clear. Liturgism is, when all is said, the Prayer Book's ambition; and an understanding of this principle is a boon to all its users, who would use it with intelligence and effectiveness. Within the Prayer Book church, it is of course true that there will be found, at times and places, services which are purely ritualistic, or purely free. But even these will be "different," in that they will be molded by the essential norm into reticence and reasonableness. Meantime, in the general usage of the Church, the services are consciously and helpfully liturgical. They are liturgical in that the people are active, not passive. In all the services of the congregation the people have a constant and vital part. Something is all the time expected of them. The service is in every instance theirs. Even in listening to the word, their response is anticipated and provided for, and at every phase of praise or prayer, their attitude of participation or response is significant. The New England farmer who testified on the occasion of his first experience,

that he " never let on, but riz and fell every time," paid his unconscious tribute to the excellence of a form of worship, which excluded no one, and was not performed for lookers-on.

The careful welding of word and act together has its illustration in every service. The Holy Communion, in the nature of the case, is the service wherein the act has its strongest emphasis, and that is the very service where the solemn reading of the word, in the Gospel, has special prominence, and the only service in which there is special provision for the sermon. Moreover, in this service, too, the acts of consecration and communion are enshrined in a form which is preëminent for its presentation of the great truths of the word, in repeated sequences of supreme significance, in Comfortable Words, and Sanctus, in Consecration Prayer and Gloria in Excelsis. On the other hand, the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, while emphatically offices of the word, and its presentation, look for the expressive act in the people's kneeling and standing, and formal responses, and especially in the Creed climax, where as one body they give the sign of allegiance and loyalty.

By faithful and intelligent adherence to these three Working Principles of Interpretation, Rubrication and Liturgism, the people enter into a deeper understanding of the riches of the book, and its ever-unfolding opportunities, and come to a truer and more vital using of its services in their worship.

V

MORNING PRAYER AND EVENING PRAYER

I

THE first book in the Library of our Service books contains the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer. These are more frequently used than any other of our services, and so stand in the forefront.

In studying these we must say something of their history: because in Chapter I it may have seemed as if the philosophy of ritual there expressed implied a book especially compiled to set forth these ideas. This is not so. The idea of worship and its expression set forth already is inherent in all human nature and in every religion, and especially in Christianity has been full of changes and a matter of growth. Our Book of Worship was never framed, or composed — it grew. And it grew in the persistent effort of the human heart to express more and more adequately its desire for worship. Our services of Morning and Evening Prayer, then, are only a stage in this long process, the outcome of centuries of worship, each age trying out new methods and using the experiments of the past. They are the compressed expression of the Church's life of worship through eighteen centuries.

What that spirit of worship is we have seen in Chapter I, and in Chapter II we have set forth the various forms into which it has flowed. We come now after discussing some general principles to the twofold task of tracing the growth of two of these services, and then of seeing how far they fulfill the demands of our hearts when we come to worship God.

The Daily Offices have their roots in the Synagogue worship of the Jews, just as our Holy Communion reaches back to the ritual of the Temple. The early Christians worshiped still in the Synagogue, and the reading of psalms and lessons and the prayers was familiar to them. (James 2:2.) But the separation must have come early and by themselves the Christians continued the simple form to which they had been accustomed. The Lord's Prayer and the growing creed would be said in unison and the reading of portions of the scripture, the Old Testament first, and then as the years went on, a circular letter from St. Paul, or St. Peter, or a fragment of St. Mark's Gospel, as it was copied and handed about, would be read and prayers would follow, extemporaneous or more formal and pre-composed. But it was all simple, and the worshipers took some part. It was "common" prayer. Then came the days of the monks, when the times and the trend of religion drove so many men from the active life of the world into the deserts and into monasteries, when life was cut into two parts, the secular and the sacred, and the latter, the so-called "religious," was made into a life of constant worship. There was plenty

of time and little to do, life's wants were easily supplied, and so the monastic life performed its necessary duties for the body in the short intervals between the services of the hours. (Ps. 55: 18. Cf. Ps. 119: 164). The whole day and even the night were turned into a round of services. Between midnight and daybreak there was the service called Nocturns or Matins, with Lauds attached. At six came Prime, at nine Tierce, and noon Sext, in the afternoon at three, Nones, about six, Vespers was said, and the round closed at nine o'clock by saying the last of the services, called Compline. These services were long and repetitious, dry and formal. They continued all through the Middle Ages, with but little change.

The Christian life of worship had been expanded to its utmost. Only those who had little or nothing else to do, could join in it. It was no longer "common" prayer. The common people could have no part in it. The so-called "religious" had monopolized common worship and the laity only "assisted" by kneeling at the celebration of the Mass. If they attended any of the services mentioned above and which were contained in the book called the Breviary, they could understand nothing that was said, for Latin was the language used. The worship of God had become not only burdensome but unintelligible.

At the time of the Reformation there was felt the need, not only of purifying these old forms from false doctrine, but of simplifying and shortening them and of putting them into the tongue understood by the people. The priesthood of the laity

was once more to be made vocal and effective. The men of the Church of England to whom we owe our Prayer Book undertook this work. And characteristically, in obedience to the spirit of their church and nation, they clung to all that was good in the old and refused to set forth a new order of worship. As their church was not a new creation, but a return to the principles and polity of the Apostolic times, so their Book of Worship was to retain all that the worshiping Church had developed through centuries of prayer — all that was good in it. They had at hand the Breviary, with its hours of devotion, and they found that these could easily be purified and compressed and simplified, and that when this process was completed, they had in their hands, the same expression of worship which had persisted through the accretions of the Middle Ages, the same order of approach to God, the result of the experience and experiments of centuries. These are taken up into the structure and very words of our Morning and Evening Prayer and made vital for the worship of millions to-day. And it is interesting to note that only in our Prayer Book do these appear in living form to-day. No other church has done this work. Except as recited in Latin by the Roman priests of to-day, a task they are compelled to fulfill and which is fulfilled by rapid reading each for himself, in the course of the day, no church but ours carries out by daily use the spirit and order of the old Breviary. The Breviary, as the people's book, is dead. The Breviary, as forming Book I of our Prayer Book, is alive and still growing. All that

Christian men in the past had found necessary to express when they came to worship God, is here retained, in order and largely in word. Our reformers believed that the Church, through long practice, had developed an almost perfect scheme of worship, and they were wise enough to retain it. Cranmer and his fellow-workers took the seven hour devotions and out of the morning hours, Nocturns or Matins, Lauds and Prime, framed our Morning Prayer, and out of the evening hours, Vespers and Compline, made our Evening Prayer, so that what used to take the larger part of both night and day, now could be said in an hour and a half. They have given us the compressed form of a life of constant worship extending over eighteen centuries. Thus the book we are studying is plainly an evolution and not something framed to fit a theory of worship.

"The Prayer Book as it stands is a long gallery of Ecclesiastical history which, to be understood and enjoyed thoroughly, absolutely compels a knowledge of the greatest events and names of all periods of the Christian Church.

"To Ambrose we owe our *Te Deum,* Charlemagne breaks the silence of our Ordination Prayer by the *Veni Creator Spiritus.* The persecutions have given us one creed, the Empire another. The name of the first great patriarch of the Byzantine Church closes our daily service. The Litany is the bequest of the first great patriarch of the Latin Church amidst the terrors of the Roman pestilence. Our Collects are the joint production of Fathers, Popes and Reformers. Our

Communion Service bears the traces of every fluctuation of the Reformation, through the two extremes of the reign of Edward to the conciliatory policy of Elizabeth and the revolutionary zeal of the Restoration." Stanley.

II

But our purpose is not historical. Most works on the Prayer Book are concerned chiefly either with its history or with minute explanation of its parts, to its very phraseology. To some of these the reader is referred in the note at the end of this chapter.

We are concerned with the worshipful attitude and its expression in word and act in the Prayer Book. What is it that, as we have set forth already in Chapter I, should be found in the expression of the soul's worship? Praise. There are other feelings to be expressed, but praise is the highest and dominates all. To approach God and get any glimpse of his Being and glory is to burst forth into praise. This aspect is the most prominent one in the ancient Hours. They are built on the principle of Praise, they center in the saying or singing of the Psalms, so that another name for the Breviary is "Psalterium." The services for Matins and Prime began with the Invocation, "In the Name" etc., then came the Lord's Prayer with its doxology, and then the Versicle, "O Lord, open," and the response, "and our mouth" etc., and the Gloria, "Praise ye the Lord" and "The Lord's Name be praised," and then the Venite, the

great invitatory to praise, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us heartily rejoice," etc. This was followed by the Psalter, a selection of only twelve Psalms with their antiphons and glorias. This is the heart of our own two services, as it should be. It is the way that men have always approached the Christian's God. But the framers of our Book have added more praise. Instead of reciting daily or weekly only a dozen, or on Sunday eighteen Psalms, they have given us the whole Psalter in the course of the month, and so in time every aspect of praise is put into our mouths.

The Psalms are thus the dominant element in our worship. They dominate all the others, confession of sin, hearing God's word, profession of faith, and prayer, all these are taken up and appropriated and fused by the overpowering outpouring of praise. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power." In this spirit the framers of our book were not afraid to sound at its very beginning the note of penitence. And so they took the Confession and Absolution from the end of the old services, where it was wont to refer to the imperfection of the congregation's worship, personal confession, being then private and auricular, and so having no place in public worship, and put these in the forefront with verses from God's word and an Exhortation as to the worship which follows. Because in the light of God's presence we first see ourselves as we really are, and that is penitence. Only on our knees can we begin to praise God, and after we have confessed

our sin and begged for forgiveness and heard it freely given to such as ask for it humbly, can we be fit and ready to stand on our feet and praise. Only then do we personally feel the goodness and mercy of God,— *how* worthy he is. Then our book commands us to stand, invites us to praise in the Venite, and puts the words of the glorious Psalms in our mouths.

But the more we know of God, the more we shall be moved to praise him. The service of Matins had a lesson consisting of three or nine short passages, and Lauds and Prime had a short chapter and these were each followed by a burst of praise, the former by *Te Deum,* "We praise thee, O Lord," and the latter by the *Benedictus,* "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel."

And so, bodily, this next stage of worship has been incorporated into our Book. And here again its compilers have generously given us more than the old monks would. Instead of short selections, with many repetitions and with bits from the lives of the Saints, they have given us, as with the Psalter, the whole of God's words in the Holy Scriptures. The Lectionary gives us in daily portions every word of the Old Testament in the course of the year, and the New Testament twice over, and the more we hear of God, the more we desire to praise him. The natural desire of the mind, after listening to the revelation which God has made of himself, is to gather up this knowledge into some form which will express our faith. And so we use here the Apostles' Creed, not a complete statement but a symbol of our Faith, collect-

ing in a few short articles the essentials, on which our praise rests, and which give us our confidence to approach God in prayer, which we are now ready to do at the close of our worship. The prayers begin with the Collect for the Day, thereby connecting the Divine Office, as our two services used to be called, with the Divine Liturgy, or Office of Holy Communion; the other name for which and that which best describes its character, is "The Eucharist," which means "giving of thanks." The two are only different expressions of our praise.

Then come the prayers, which are mostly intercessions. These are collected from the three early offices, Matins, contributing the Lord's Prayer, which has been used earlier, Lauds, the Collect for the Day, and the Collect for Peace and Prime giving us the Collect for Grace. Here the old service ended. But our compilers once more added, perfectly in the spirit of the old forms, the prayer for All in Authority, typifying the Nation, and those for the clergy, typifying the Church, and for All Conditions of Men, adding, still in the spirit of praise, the General Thanksgiving and closing with the beautiful prayer of St. Chrysostom, and the Grace in St. Paul's words to the Corinthians.

The service of Evening Prayer is naturally assimilated to the Morning Prayer. It is taken from the Hours for Vespers and Compline which each began at the Lord's Prayer, and were each rich in the recitation of the Psalter. Vespers had a lesson from the Old Testament, followed by the

Magnificat, while Compline had a lesson from the New Testament, followed by *Nunc Dimittis.*

Again the compilers having kept the spirit of praise, prefix opening invitatory sentences, an exhortation, or description of the order of the service to follow; the general confession and absolution and the closing prayers after the Creed are, in the main, like those in the morning, only the Prayer for Peace is not now for outward peace from enemies and adversaries, but that inward peace of the heart, which the world cannot give, and the next prayer is not for grace and guidance through the day, but for protection during the helpless hours of the night.

III

The two officers are, it will be noticed, exactly similar in outline. What we may call the "worshipful content," or that which makes the service an efficient vehicle of worship, is in each case the same. The service presents an inevitable process, and a satisfying progress, in accordance with what is, as it were, a natural history of worship. The great steps of the progress are five. Coming into the Presence, entering expectant into God the Father's house, the worshiper's first instinct of unworthiness finds expression in the confession of sin, led up to by exhortation, and culminating in the declaration of absolution, and the Lord's Prayer, to which the Absolution serves as a bidding. The second inevitable and natural instinct is to give thanks to the Father for his manifold gifts, and

this finds expression in repeated songs of praise, in Venite or Psalms, in first and second canticles. A third instinct, or desire, upon entering the Presence is to hear the word of the Lord, and the listening soul is satisfied by the lections from Old and New Testaments which alternate with the expressions of praise. The worshipers then come, united as they are in and through their corporate experiences of confession, praise and listening, to the climax of the service, the great gateway of the Creed, the symbol of their common faith, the pledge of their unswerving loyalty, through which they enter the final part of the service, the enjoyment of communion, the untrammeled outpouring of their souls in petition, intercession and thanksgiving to the Father of all.

It is this unfaltering rightness of the order, this genius of the service, which furnishes the answer to the question which every user of the Prayer Book must ask himself — What is it which makes this service, which commands my admiration and my love, a great service? For that it is great we instinctively feel, and of this excellence which makes the service a great expression of worship we are even ready to boast. We know that it is not merely because the form is ancient, or contains much Scripture, or chances to meet our habitual moods. We see the ground of its beauty and power in the unity and progress of its structure, and in its worshipful reasonableness.

Note. Supplementing what was said in Chapter II about the five books which are now bound into one in our Prayer Book, it is important to

note that there is one still left outside. While our Hymnal is sometimes closely attached to the Prayer Book by its binding, it is a separate book. And yet it is one of our books of worship. It is the expression of our praise through music, the setting of lyrical songs so that the congregation may praise God musically in unison. Thus the principle of praise is still further carried out and we generally begin and end our Morning and Evening Services with the singing of a hymn. We now have incorporated in the Prayer Book, as one of its five books, the Psalter, or Jewish Hymn Book. It is conceivable that some day there might be incorporated there the Christian Hymn Book, which ought to be that body of hymns which forms the invariable element in all hymnals, and is the universal hymnody of Christendom.

SUGGESTED READING

Barry: Teacher's Prayer Book. (Am. Ed.)
Proctor and Frere: A New History of the Book of Common Prayer.
Daniel: The Prayer Book; Its History, Language and Contents.
Pullan: The History of the Book of Common Prayer.
Dearmer: Everyman's History of the Prayer Book.
Hart: The Book of Common Prayer.

VI

THE LITANY

I

THE Litany is in a peculiar and impressive sense the people's service. In this fact rests its claim upon the constant affection of Christian congregations. It is through the full recognition of this quality in it that we are to understand its preëminent place among those great offices of devotion which are the recognized instruments of the people's worship.

That it belongs in a special sense to the people is made very clear by a consideration of its historic uses. It is the service which leaves the remoter sanctuary, and the place of the high altar, and comes down to linger in procession in the midst of the kneeling congregation. More than that, it goes out through the Church's open door, and walks the familiar streets of traffic. It passes close to the doors of the homes, and the humblest of them, where the people dwell, and winds its way among the fields where they toil, mingling itself with all the intimacies of their daily experience.

It is said that the Litany form had its origin in the time which followed upon the break-up of the Roman Empire, and that it was the invention of

Bishop Mamertus, whose soul was burdened by the needs and distresses of his day, when moral degradations and excesses were emphasized by the occurrence of earthquakes, pestilences and droughts. There must be a new form, he felt, for "drawing down the mercy of God." It was a similar need, in the exigencies of the Reformation and the convulsions of that age, which urged the setting forth of our English Litany. There were many varying forms of Litany, which sprang up in different times and places, but the general manner and outline are the same, and our Litany retains a place of preëminence, just because it has grown into its present outline through accretions and additions which have sprung spontaneously out of recurring experiences of human needs. It is the people's, because it goes out among them and their deepest needs, and because through it the people reach out of themselves to lay hold upon God's mercy and deliverance.

Furthermore, it is close to the heart of the people, because after its opening invocations to the Triune God, it is consistently, from beginning to end, from the appeals to "the precious blood" of the first suffrage, through the appeal to his promise to be present with the "two or three," even to the end of the world, of St. Chrysostom's prayer, a prayer to Christ. It keeps close to the heart of the Elder Brother. It gives every one, the unworthiest and the most hesitant, a chance to be included, because of the assurance that he who was tempted like as we are understands. It lays fast hold of the Humanity of God.

Finally, in its form and method, it expects and requires the constant participation of the people themselves. It is not done for them, as if a sacrifice by a priest. It is not prayed for them, by a minister however truly their leader, or by one who represents, however welcome, or trusted, or sympathetic his representation. It is prayed by themselves. As an actual fact, throughout the service, the prayer utterance is in the mouths of the people. The minister recites the needs, but it is the people who pray the prayer. The people's voices are forever the dominant and all-embracing note.

II

But there is something still deeper, which forms the basis of the service's power and appeal. We ought to expect that a form of service which has so long endured in the affection of the people, and which has provided them with so potent a vehicle for worship, would possess in the very genius of the service itself an explanation of its power. It challenges us to find an answer to the question as to what is the "worshipful content" which explains its greatness. "This is a great service," say the people. "We love it." What is it that makes it great? Let us try to answer that question, that understanding, we may love it the more, and use it the better.

The answer is that it unites in a wonderful way the two primal instincts of prayer. These are what we may call "the right of petition," and "the rest in God." If prayer be prayer, then may

we bring to God all our needs, as children ask their father for what they want, without stinting and without hesitation. We do not know if we shall get that for which we ask, or if it is best that we should have it. We know that we may ask, and that it is good for us, and for God (may we not say?) that there should be this asking. Therefore we bring all our fears in the face of Nature's terrors, or of man's cruelties; and all our wishes for the welfare of those dear to us, in their sicknesses and sorrows, their misfortunes and lonelinesses, their great experience in child-bearing, and in conflict, and in dangerous adventure. It is this primal instinct in prayer which is met by the piled up petitions of the suffrages, with their insistence of need and their haunting rhythm.

And the other instinct is supplied by the constant refrain of the "Good Lord," singing its way through the whole, as it weaves itself in and out in the progress of the prayer, and reassures the heart in its confidence in God. The instinct of "rest in God" has not need for many words. Sometimes it requires only silence, and rest in the thought of him, and openness of soul. If there be a word, as in this people's service, for the assurance of heart to heart, it is only the one word that is required, said over and over again to the soul's refreshing, of "the goodness of the Lord."

Sometimes, it is to be feared, the gist of the matter is obscured or forgotten, when the mind or voice stresses the other part of the response, the "deliver us," or the "we beseech thee to hear us," which is not to be stressed at all, but is only

the formal prayer-expression. It is this false emphasis which leads some at times to imagine that the Litany is a process of wresting from an unwilling God the blessings which in reality he waits to give.

Even if it be historically true that the thought of inventing a method of wresting mercy from God lay at the heart of the Litany's origin, we must not forget that the inventors builded better than they knew. Nor must we forget that succeeding ages of Litany users have by their interpretation filled the great prayer with its deeper and truer meaning. Indeed, in the very prayer forms themselves we have a right to find and feel a meaning more original than their origin. The word "deliver us" means "set us free," and in it our hearts speak, not a last resort in our despair to God's possible mercy, but a laying hold on that liberty which is the heritage of the sons of God. In like manner the prayer utterance of the people, "we beseech thee to hear us," is not a hesitating approach to our Lord's possibly unwilling attention, but our glad and confident claim upon him whose concern for our needs we know beforehand, upon One who heareth prayer, and to whom all flesh shall come.

The purpose here is merely to indicate and make clear this underlying idea of the whole service. It is this combination of the two primal instincts of prayer which constitutes its genius, and which explains the fact of its being so great an instrument of worship.

III

With this principle in mind, one may approach each part of the service with new appreciation, and especially find new beauties in its changing phases, which save it from undue monotony, and furnish it with fresh and inspiring surprises, or terms of thought. The remembrance of its inherent principle and source of power will illuminate its opening section of seven "deprecations" or prayers for "deliverance from," with its two "obsecrations," or recollections of the meaning of Christ's whole life for us, and will fill with understanding and satisfaction the section which follows of seven plus ten "intercessions," with the closing "lesser litany," and culminating Lord's Prayer, of the Litany's main division. And it will give added value to the second section, sometimes called the "war section," with its versicles and responses, its antiphon, and its prayers.

VII

THE HOLY COMMUNION

I

THAT the service of the Holy Communion is the chief of all the services of the congregation is universally acknowledged by the people of the church. Its preëminence is equally recognized by those who urge its frequent use, and by those who would reserve it for less frequent and therefore more impressive and better prepared-for occasions. Why is it thus esteemed the great, the culminating service and act of worship?

The attempt to answer this question will lead us on our way to an understanding of its supreme appeal, and to a clear apprehension of its genius as an instrument of worship.

The first answer, and the one which possesses perhaps the most immediate and general recognition, is that it is the service ordained by Christ himself. In seeking expression in worship for our sense of loyalty to him, there can be no more obvious and simple way than the way of obedience to his express command. It is certainly true that many of his followers, with no very clear notion of the Master's intention or purpose, and with no thought-out estimate of the inherent value of the

sacrament itself, give themselves in humility and trust to the simple carrying out of his sacred charge,—"Do this in remembrance of me." No analysis of Gospel records, with an alleged rediscovery of the original Gospel, and of the Master's mind the night before his death, can serve to shake the universal Christian consciousness that there was intent to leave with his followers an obligation to a Memorial Service of fellowship. It is well that is so. The motive of obedience is a potent one, and the service which enshrines this participation in the Master's will, through obedience and remembrance, must necessarily be supreme.

II

There is a further reason in the constant observance of the Church from the beginning. To this all ancient records, within the New Testament, and beyond it, give eloquent testimony. The story of the liturgies of all the churches, in their infinite richness and variety, speaks of the persistence of the great service, and of the sense of sacred obligation with which the followers of Christ gather for the supper of their Lord. This cloud of witnesses through all the ages presents in itself an inescapable appeal to the Christians of to-day. The sense of the great company, not only of those drawn together throughout the world of this present time, but gathered from all generations and centuries, urges the souls of men to lay hold upon this bond of union, and to become partakers in the universal fellowship which is the Communion of Saints. It

is an urgent and compelling call that the supper be furnished with guests, and the disciple knows that the faithful of all ages and lands are expecting until his place be filled. The invitation echoes from countless lips, "This do in remembrance of me,— in remembrance of him."

III

But in itself the observance possesses the elements of an inevitable greatness. It is instinct with genius for the realizing within men's souls of the final facts of the spiritual life. Partaking together of the common food is the very method of individual and corporate life. The material side of it gives it power because we are in very deed tabernacled in the flesh. It is the testimony of age-long human experience that no other act can compare with the partaking together of the bread of life, in establishing and cementing that communion with the life of God and with the life of man, without which we cannot live. Had Christ himself not instituted the Lord's Supper, then must his followers have perforce forthwith instituted it, since their life with him and with one another demands it.

The two names by which the sacrament is most commonly and universally designated are the Lord's Supper, and the Holy Communion, and these names are equally expressive of the genius and method of the great service, and testify to its preëminence. Each name is of two words. One word is not sufficient, because what is demanded is

a combination of intimacy and mystery, and this combination each name supplies. The soul requires in its culminating act of worship the opportunity of intimacy. It must make and keep connection with the most familiar and constant things of life. Its feet must be upon the ground. It must also possess the immediacy of approach to things divine. It demands to lay hold upon the ultimate mystery. In its very expression it must have to do with things inexpressible and unutterable. The names give form to these two equally insistent demands. There is nothing more intimate, homely, or familiar than a supper. But it is the *Lord's* supper. There is nothing more intimate and familiar, more essential to living, than communion or fellowship. The ultimate horror for the human soul is solitude. But it is the *Holy* Communion. Its very title helps us to an understanding of the fact that this service is our culminating and supreme act of worship.

IV

There is a further question for users of the Prayer Book. Why is the Communion Service of that book so great and satisfying an instrument of worship,— so worthy a vehicle for the supreme observance?

The service itself, as we hold it in our hands to-day, is the descendant of a long line of ancient liturgies. It has taken up into itself a vast and sacred experience in Christian worship. This is much in itself.

When we come to study these ancient liturgies,

one thing at least becomes plain, and that is that each one is composed of parts. There are, for instance, two parts which may be universally recognized. The names of these are familiar to students of the subject, the pro-anaphora, and the anaphora, or the ordinary of the mass, and the canon of the mass. In a word, these two parts represent a preparatory service, and the service, or celebration of the sacrament itself. Still a third part becomes recognizable at certain times or under certain conditions, and this is the Communion, that is the partaking by the people of the offered sacrifice. There is a possibility, and in certain cases, a tendency, to make these parts not only separable, but separate. The pro-anaphora, or ordinary of the mass, or the ante-Communion, may be severed by an interval, or inserted hymn, from the real service which follows. It may be used by itself. It is of possible edification to outsiders, who are not as yet of the number of the faithful. It may conceivably be used on the day before, as a service by itself of preparation for to-morrow's sacrament. In like manner, the Communion of the people, if this Communion is infrequent, and if it is esteemed unessential, the offering of the sacrifice being the one necessary celebration of the feast, may be relegated to a subordinate place of occasional occurrence.

But it is the genius of our Prayer Book service to make clear, while the service has parts, that these parts are not detachable, but are parts of a whole, are parts whose significance consists in emphasizing and realizing the whole.

As a matter of fact, the parts of the service, as it stands in our book to-day, are three. They may be designated as a series of Approaches, in order by means of a series, to make it clear that the one great service all through is presented as an Approach to the Presence. Herein rest the reasonableness and beauty of its structure. The approaches may be symbolized by the plan of Solomon's Temple, or of any Christian church. There are the Outer Court, and the Inner Court, and the Holy of Holies. There are the Nave and the Choir and the Sanctuary. But the temple is one — the church is one. This structure of the service is carried through with amazing symmetry and proportion and richness of detail, like an architectural plan. The first approach may be called the Instructional Approach. Here are the Scriptural lessons, from the New Testament, in Epistle and Gospel, and from the Old, in the Ten Commandments; and here through the same enunciation of God's law, is the opportunity for self-examination. The second approach may be called the Intercessional Approach. Here is the remembrance of our brethren in the giving of alms, and in the great intercession, which leads as intercession does, to confession, followed by the assurance of God's forgiveness, fortified by the summary of his gifts of grace, as contained in the Comfortable Words. The third approach is the Sacramental Approach, with the central Prayer of Consecration and its Words of Institution, followed by the Communion of the people.

Moreover, each approach is ordered in a cor-

responding manner with every other, in the method of its inauguration and of its climax. Each begins, with the priest and people, so to speak, on their knees in humility or penitence, and each ends with an outburst of triumphant thanksgiving and praise. In the first, we begin with the Office's collect, and its prayer that the thoughts of our hearts may be cleansed; and we end with the triumphant singing or saying of the Nicene Creed. In the second, we begin with the great prayer of intercession which takes up into itself our alms and oblations, and we end with the exultant Sanctus. In the third, we begin with the prayer of humble access, and the sense of our unworthiness so much as to gather up the crumbs, and we end, after the culminating Lord's Prayer and word of Thanksgiving, with the praises of the Gloria in Excelsis. And then, with the Blessing, the service is over, and it is over with a sense of completeness. The unity is the striking fact, and gives its compelling force and beauty to the supreme act of worship. It is an approach through a series, but it is one great approach. No part is detachable or inconsequential. It is a progressive realization of the fundamental facts of God's gift, and of man's participation. It is a continuous and self-completing sacrifice. Priest and people together enter into solemn preparation, together they consecrate the bread and wine, and plead the sacrifice, together they partake of the Body and Blood. All are interdependent in one communion, all parts of the service are indissolubly united, and contribute essentially to the perfection of the whole.

The service of our Prayer Book indubitably derives its greatness, in a true sense, from the fact that its roots are in the great liturgies of the past, and from its fidelity to the total experience of worshiping Christendom. But it may claim with reason that it is a very perfect flower of a long process of growth, and though sometimes the methods of its development have been almost by accident, while again they have been through deliberate determination, the result is a model, not necessarily perfect, or the denial of further development to come,— but yet a model, to which the churches of the Anglican Communion and churches everywhere, may well look with imitative envy, and gratitude.

VIII

THE SPIRIT OF THE BOOK AND ITS USE

I

THE question was asked in the opening chapter whether, and if so, how, our Book of Common Prayer expressed and fulfilled the manifold needs of the human heart as it came to worship God. It is hoped that this question has been answered. But not only, as was said in the closing words of Chapter V, does it satisfy the needs of the individual worshiper, not only does it bring the individual into a common worship with other individuals, its scope is far wider. It has no sympathy with the selfish "private worship in public," which so many try to make it. It is the People's Book. The word "Common" in its title has the same connotation as in "Commonwealth," it is less for the individual than for the *community*.

This comes not only from its Catholic comprehensiveness, its determined acceptance of opposite views, nor from its touching the needs and aspirations of every part of a man and of so many different kinds of men, but from its inherent interest in and insistence on the social side of man's life. It has caught its spirit from the Lord's Prayer, "After this manner, therefore pray ye, say Our

Father." The "we" and "us" and "our" are not editorial but vital. They mean what they say and they call on us to mean it. The congregation which uses this Book is not a congeries of units, a number of grains of sand in a heap, with no cohesion nor unity. It is a body of worshipers approaching God as an organic unity, each coöperating with each, and all forming the body of Christ which is the Church.

There is a time and a place for a man to stand before God alone. We all must. But when we assemble and meet together to use this Book, is not the time. It fulfills and expands the form of worship Christ gave us in the Lord's Prayer. It compels us, like that, to clasp hands in spirit with all our brothers and thus to approach our Father together. Here we are forced to remember that all we are brethren, that we are one in our sin and in our need of salvation, one in our desire to praise God, and that it is good and necessary to pray one for another. The Prayer Book's Confession of Sin, whether in Daily Office, or Communion Service, is not your sin or mine; the terms are too general to satisfy the individual conscience, which has to say, "thus and thus have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." It is purposely general, because it is confession of the corporate sin of a great body of people. Our thoughts are to be lifted from what we have done that is wrong to the sin of the world, the sins of the people kneeling by us, the crimes committed in our community; and we are made to feel these vicariously as our own, the shame and blame of them, the need of repentance for them,

and the need of forgiveness. Our common brotherhood makes us responsible for the sins of our brothers, makes us share them, makes us feel their weight. In like manner the great words of the Absolution declare that God promises forgiveness to his people, that he pardoneth all who truly repent, in which pardon we pray that we may have a share. And after confession and absolution comes the climax in the Lord's Prayer whose spirit we have now caught and whose words we can now say. This is what is meant by the Social Character of our Book of Worship.

It is still further expressed by its common praise, too often usurped by a choir. When we rise from our knees and stand in joy, all of us should sing aloud; "O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation"; or "Glory be to God on High, and on earth peace." It is a perfect example of that modern exercise called "a community sing," the spontaneous expression of a common joy, into which all must enter if it is to be worthily expressed. And in the hearing of the message from God, wherever in any service the Word is read, the burden in the Old Testament is that of a people, a nation, guided and redeemed by God as a whole; and in the New, that of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Nor do we forget how largely the prayers are intercessory, remembering the needs of others before our own.

Here is the Social Gospel proclaimed in every part of our Book. It belongs to the people and has their interests at heart. It is not something for good

Episcopalians to enjoy, in beautiful churches and with sumptuous adjuncts, but should be heard like the Lord, by the common people gladly; as it will be when they understand what is their heritage.

If this is true, instead of being one of the distinctive (and separating) marks of our Episcopal Church, the Prayer Book should offer one of the strongest bonds of unity to Christians of every name.

II

This spirit of the Book, which makes of it a unifier for all Christian worshipers, imposes upon its users a serious responsibility. As its users, they are in a real sense its possessors, and its possessors in order that they may give it freely to the world's and the Church's needs. In the long run its wider influence rests upon the simple devotion of the worshipers who use the book, and upon their intelligent, high-minded, and true-hearted employment of its great expressions of worship.

As one dwells upon the beauty and impressiveness of each of its great services, a thought which is sure to be brought home is this. The occasion of the use of any one of these is a great opportunity, a great event. This ought to be the conviction of every individual who goes to God's house to worship. He is to take his part in a great act of worship, which is to be ordered according to a form of service, which has been perfected in its expression through the thought and experience and inspiration of ages of worship and of leaders of worship. There ought to be an exhilaration and a sobriety

and a joy in his approach. His silent prayer of preparation ought to be a heartfelt prayer that he may be worthy to be a partaker, and that he may make a complete offering, keeping nothing back, whether of penitence or praise.

And here it must be recognized how much depends upon the leader of the worship. If the service is a great event for the worshiper in the pew, how great an event ought it to be for the minister. He brings not only the needs and offerings of his own soul, but the demands upon him of all the waiting people. His is a great responsibility,— to be the sufficient medium for utterance, the director and inspirer, the interpreter, encourager, ambassador in Christ's stead. These things are not said with a view of suggesting any external dignity of office, or any superior or imposed priesthood. They are said simply to call to mind the facts of the situation, the inescapable findings of experience. So much, so very much depends on the minister. It is true that there are the prayers and hymns themselves, the forms of the service, the great words and sublime thoughts, made doubly sacred by age-long and precious associations — these things which no man can take away. It is true that in a very real sense the book itself in the worshiper's hand is a protection from the vagaries of the minister. And yet when all is said, so much depends upon him. In the light of the great event, there is surely no room for lack of preparation on his part. He ought to know beforehand what he is going to read from God's word and how to read it. Surely he

ought to pray, not read, the prayers, and know and feel just what prayers ought to be prayed that day and that hour. And the words of praise in hymn and canticle that are to be the people's utterances ought to be his special care. The unity of impression of that given service which it is so possible to obtain, through an understanding of the book's riches and possibilities in variety and flexibility,—this must be his care. In face of the great event, there can be no room for thoughtlessness, carelessness, the slipshod or irreverent manner, the unintelligible utterance, the destroying wrong emphasis, the annoying and obtrusive mannerism, the unsympathetic and perfunctory rendering, and the half-hearted entrance into the act of worship. And yet these things happen, and happen often. Ministers and people cannot tell themselves too often that the service in which they take part is a great event.

Unity is the watchword of our day and generation. Whether it be unity between classes or races, unity industrial or social, the unity between nations which is to insure a new and better world, or the unity of the Church, which seizes the imagination and fires the zeal, it is for unity that the religious labor most earnestly, it is the vision of the coming Kingdom that most insistently inspires the enthusiasm of Christian worshipers. It is because our People's Book of Worship is so great a medium for the realizing of unity, so truly a handbook of the Kingdom of God and of his Christ, that the lovers and users of it must hold it as a sacred trust, and so deeply feel their responsibility that their use of

it, and their whole-hearted participation in its services, will render it the efficient and compelling instrument it may well be in the great cause of universal Christian fellowship.

THE END

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